

## **ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS of COMMENCING RESIDENTS**

We know that our students come to us from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some have just completed their high school education living with family, others have had a “gap year” and may have already moved away from home. Other students come to us a little further along in their life’s journey, perhaps as mature-age students or to undertake postgraduate study. You may be your student’s parent, sibling, grandparent, partner or spouse. Not to exclude any relationships we’re going to refer to “your student”.

### **How can you help your student?**

If you’re reading this document it’s apparent to us that even though your student has moved on-campus you will continue to play an important supporting role in their success at Flinders. While you won’t be able to support them in all the same direct ways that you may have done in the past, there are many things that you can do, remotely.

Some of our younger students are used to their parents sorting everything out for them. The time is coming, very quickly, for them to be confident enough to talk to academic and professional services staff about their enrolment, topic choices, assessment items, etc. Our experience is that where family members have managed their student’s application and acceptance process and asked all the questions, their student tends to come to Flinders perhaps not fully understanding what they will encounter when they arrive. As your student will be the person living here it is important for them to take some ownership. By all means keep across the steps that need to be taken as we move towards Move-In Day but allow your student to take charge of the process themselves. If they are younger, they are entering a whole new world of independence and responsibility. The best way to help them transition is by letting them make these decisions themselves. Be there to guide them, make sure they are on the right track, but allow them the space to do it themselves.

We’ve included the following advice and information based on all the questions family members have asked us over the years. We hope that it will give you an insight into the environment your student will be living in, what administrative tasks they will need to complete, and to help set your mind at ease that you are leaving them in good hands.

### **An offer of accommodation**

An offer of accommodation at Flinders does not necessarily mean that the offer of a place in an academic programme will follow.

Given the importance of securing accommodation early, offers of accommodation for commencing residents are made as early as possible after we have placed our returning residents and often in advance of academic offers being made. As a consequence, if your student has received an offer of accommodation, it is contingent upon them being offered, and accepting, an academic place.

Accepting their offer of accommodation and completing all relevant paperwork and making the required payments by the due date will ensure that a place is available should they require it.

If your student no longer requires their accommodation place (for example, they accept a place at another university) they can cancel their accommodation in writing and receive a refund in line with the terms laid out in the Accommodation Agreement. Refunds made via credit/debit cards can be processed quickly but refunds of payments made via other means (cheque, for example) can take up to four weeks to process so please take this into account when paying those Advance Fees.

**Deferring academic studies for a year**

An offer of accommodation may be deferred for 12 months. This requires your student to pay the Advance Fee and to have this arrangement confirmed in an exchange of correspondence with our Manager, Residential Services [Email – [flinders.living@flinders.edu.au](mailto:flinders.living@flinders.edu.au)]

**Our relationship with you**

We understand that you may wish to be involved as much as possible in your student's education and their living arrangements. The University is however bound by the Australian Privacy Principles contained in the *Privacy Act 1988*. The University's Privacy Policy may be found at:

<http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/governance/privacy-policy.cfm>

This policy sets out the ways in which the University may collect, store, use, manage and protect an individual's personal information.

As a general rule, information not publicly known and which concerns a resident will not be disclosed to anyone. Disclosure of information to third parties will occur only with the consent of the resident concerned and such consent will need to be given expressly and in writing.

In this context, unless your student is under 18 years of age, you are a third party (even if you are paying the bills on their behalf) and you should seek information directly from them. If you request this information and we decline to provide it, please do not think we are being difficult. Rather, we are meeting our legislative and policy obligations. We're also meeting our end of the trust relationship we have established with your student.

A fair percentage of residents will give permission for third parties (such as their parents or a sponsoring organisation) to discuss matters related to their accommodation fees. Even if your student provides consent to information regarding an investigation into a possible breach of residential community standards with you, the Deputy Principal or Principal will not discuss such matters with you unless your student is also present whether this by telephone or in person.

If we have concerns for their safety or their health one of our senior staff members will make contact with you. Our privacy policy permits the exchange of information if your student is deemed to be at risk. In normal circumstances however we will not share information about your student's movements, friendship group, relationships, academic performance, etc.

If you have any concerns for your student's well-being you should telephone us and ask to speak to the Deputy Principal in the first instance.

**Flinders Living Staff***The Principal*

The Principal is the Division Head and is responsible to the University's Chief Operating Officer, the Vice-President (Corporate Services) for the leadership and management of Flinders Living.

The Principal, James Atkinson, maintains a visible presence within the residential community and your student will catch up with him (and sometimes his wife, Bronte) at sporting, social and cultural events and is always welcome to make a time to speak to him about personal, academic or community matters of concern.

*Deputy Principal –*

Andrea Rohde is the Deputy Principal and the senior staff member with responsibility for student welfare and support. A registered Mental Health Social Worker with over 20 years of experience as a practitioner, Andrea coordinates the Division's student development and support programmes, providing our students with appropriate referrals to service providers either within the University or externally where appropriate.

Andrea takes a keen interest in the personal and academic progress of every resident. While we suggest that it is best to telephone or email Flinders Living Administration in advance for a confirmed appointment, your student can drop by Flinders Living Administration to see if she happens to be available, by chance.

*Manager, Residential Services –*

Our Manager, Residential Services is Gary Shaw. Gary is responsible for managing our residential services areas including marketing, recruitment and admissions, occupancy and rooms management, group accommodation, private accommodation service and housekeeping. Any complex issues or concerns regarding admissions would be best directed to Gary in the first instance.

*Professional Services and Contracted Staff –*

In terms of the number of University-employed professional services staff, Flinders Living is one of the smallest divisions in the University. We do, however, have a large complement of contracted staff supporting our students including Cater Care Australia (Catering Services), Australian Green Clean (Cleaning Services), Green by Nature (Grounds Maintenance). A number of staff from Property, Facilities & Development Division are also placed here at Flinders Living. Don't worry, after a while your student will start to recognise these team members' faces as part of our community.

*Child Protection –*

Flinders University is committed to promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people accessing services offered by the University, in accordance with the *Children's Protection Act 1993* (SA). Because a number of our residents are under 18 years of age, the University has determined that all positions within the division and those outside the division but are in contact with children are "prescribed" within the meaning of the above Act.

**Residential Tutors and Coordinators**

Each year, following a competitive selection process, the University appoints a team of Residential Tutors (University Hall) and Residential Coordinators (Deirdre Jordan Village).

Their primary role is to facilitate a sense of community amongst residents in their area of responsibility as well as being a source of academic, personal and social advice and support. As a result of their intensive training prior to their commencement in the role, these are the "go to" people for your student.

If your student tells you that they are feeling homesick, unsure of what to do in a particular circumstance or where to go for a service on campus, possibly feeling uncomfortable, need academic advice or time management tips, or are having difficulty getting along with a fellow resident in their unit, then ask them "Have you spoken to your Residential Tutor/Coordinator?" If they haven't, nine times out of ten, the Tutor/Coordinator will be able to be of assistance or refer them to someone who can.

If your student tells you that they have sought assistance from their Tutor/Coordinator but the situation or their concerns continue, suggest that they speak with the Deputy Principal.

**Outside Hours Support**

Each evening from 5.00 p.m. to 9.00 a.m. the following morning and all day and evening on weekends and public holidays a Residential Tutor (Hall) and Residential Coordinator (Village) will be rostered for duty.

If your student has been locked out of their room, needs urgent medical attention, wishes to report a critical maintenance issue, or is concerned for their own welfare or that of another resident then the Duty Residential Tutor/Coordinator is available to assist them.

*Contact Telephone Numbers –*

Hall	Duty Residential Tutor	+ 61 8 7221 8930
Village	Duty Residential Coordinator	+ 61 9 7221 8950

University Security is also available 24/7 for assistance.

**Accommodation Agreement**

It is important that your student completes this agreement themselves. It is written in plain English and is not a difficult document to understand. It is important that they understand what they are agreeing to and take personal responsibility for their decision to enter into this Agreement. If they are under 18 years of age at the time the document needs to be completed, then a parent or guardian's agreement is also required.

The Accommodation Agreement is a legally binding document and should be taken seriously. This Agreement, the Schedule of Fees and the Flinders Living Handbook, taken together set out the terms and conditions of your student's residency with us.

The Agreement is completed online and clicking "I Accept" carries with it the same binding obligations as signing a piece of paper. Your student will have grown up in an environment where most things are done online and this process should be familiar to them. We would, however, suggest that they pay significantly more attention to this than we all tend to when we agree to terms and conditions online.

The Accommodation Agreement outlines the conditions under which your student may ask to leave prior to the end of the term of the agreement. Please note that a student will only be released on the basis of exceptional circumstances.

**Accommodation fees**

Our experience suggests that it is important for parents or family members who have agreed to financially support their student during their education discuss this in some detail with a clear understanding who will be paying for what.

If they are an Australian student it is important for your student to understand the level of financial assistance they may receive from the Australian Government.

Our Schedule of Fees details the fees for the year and when payments are due. Invoices are not sent. Our payment preference is for a fortnightly direct debit which can be easily established at the time the Agreement is made.

As your student is the party to the Agreement with the University, they will be sent statements to their Flinders University student email account. It is their responsibility to ensure that payment is received on time. If you are assisting them manage their finances you should ask them to forward any emails on to you.

As noted earlier in this document, please remember that we are governed by privacy legislation and policy so even though you may be paying their account, providing a simple balance can be problematic if we do not have the appropriate approvals to share that personal information with you.

Your student can access their account statement and pay rent online through our online Resident Portal. If you wish to access this information yourself you will need to ask them to provide you with their login and password.

### **Holidays**

Your student's Accommodation Agreement will either be for an Academic Year (40 weeks) or a Semester (20 weeks) of continuous residency. If your student comes home for any holidays during the period of the Agreement their fees continue.

### **Underage residents**

If your student was under 18 years of age at the time they receive their offer of accommodation then you should have completed the parent or guardian agreement permitting them to accept the Agreement. If this was not the case then you should contact Flinders Living Administration as soon as possible.

We take our duty of care to residents under the age of 18 years seriously, in particular their access to alcoholic beverages. Our social calendar is not reliant on alcohol and many of our activities do not involve alcohol.

### **Move-In Day**

Many students appreciate their parents and family members accompanying them to Move-In Day. It can feel like it will be a somewhat overwhelming experience for both students and their parents or family members but we will do everything we can to make the transition for you and them as smooth as possible.

Here are tips from those who have experienced the transition before:

- Strongly suggest that your student re-reads all information that has been sent to them prior to leaving home. Particularly read through the section of our website that details the items your student should/should not bring with them.
- When you arrive you will be met by an enthusiastic team of student volunteers. There will be no shortage of help to lift and carry luggage and boxes and the whole process should take no more than one hour.
- Remember this is your student's day. Allow them to take the lead to encourage responsibility and many memory-making moments.
- Stay for a while to ensure that your student has settled into their room. Reassure yourself that they are in good hands by attending sessions held for parents and family members.
- Please don't arrange to take yourself student out for dinner on the Saturday evening. While this is a lovely gesture there will be key social events that same evening in both the Hall and Village where new friendships will be made. Students who didn't attend will often say later that they felt they missed out.
- We also have a "No Guests" policy during Orientation Week, including Move-In Weekend. Apart from being at full capacity, we like to allow our residents to become fully immersed in their new residential community without family members watching from the sideline.

**Orientation Week**

Orientation Week is one of the most important weeks of the year. During this period your student will start making their friends and establishing supportive networks. Attendance at some orientation sessions is compulsory.

Even if you chose to stay in Adelaide for a few days allow your student some space to get comfortable in their new living environment. They will be settling in, becoming orientated, making new friends, and if you stay longer, starting their first classes. Dropping by frequently to spend time with them or taking them out and away from their new home can compromise that process.

Additionally, encourage your student to stay at Flinders for the first few weeks even if they could, quite easily, return home for a weekend. There are so many events and activities that occur during the first weeks of the semester that simply “being around” is a good way for them to settle in and adjust to their new life.

**Visiting your student**

Should you wish to visit your student during the year you will find that we have a flexible visitor (someone who is with your student for a short period of time) and guest (someone who is staying with your student overnight) policy as long as the visits are infrequent and don't cause undue inconvenience to other residents.

We ask that you remember that the Hall and Village were designed with study-bedrooms, bathrooms, common rooms and services established for a designated number of people. The presence of additional persons, particularly in Village units, can impose pressure on other residents.

It is also important for your student and you to consider other matters. For example, if your student lives in a single gender unit and you identify as another gender, it will be important for your visit to be discussed amongst all the residents to ensure that they will be comfortable with your presence overnight. Also, bear in mind that you will need to share your student's bedroom as guests are not permitted to sleep any common areas. We have a limited number of fold-out beds and these are given out on a first-in, first-served arrangement.

If you think that you would prefer to stay off-campus then the following website will be useful. Alternately telephone Flinders Living Administration and our staff would be happy to suggest several local short-term accommodation providers about whom we have received positive feedback.

<https://southaustralia.com/plan-your-trip/places-to-stay>

**Insurance (including SA Ambulance Cover)**

The University's insurance does not cover the personal property of its residents nor does the University accept any liability or responsibility for loss or damage to your possessions. We would recommend you consider purchasing insurance particularly if your student has a number of higher value items.

Students participating in events on-campus are covered by the Flinders University Student Association's insurance policy. Social or sporting activities conducted off-campus are not covered by this insurance.

Private Ambulance Cover is recommended. It is our policy to call an Ambulance for all incidents that require more than a basic First Aid response and all costs must be borne by the resident. You should check your own private health insurance policy as your student may be covered even though they are over 18 years of age and living away from home.

### Car parking

Residents have access to Car Parks 11, 17 and 19 which have been designated by the University for their exclusive use. Car Park 11 is security fenced and gate controlled. Residents are also able to park in Car Park 22 but this is not exclusive to them.

While Car Park 11 is nominally the Car Park for the Hall and Village Units 83-90 and Car Parks 17 and 19 are the Village Car Parks, a Resident Permit will allow your student park in any of these three facilities. Your student will need to have their Access Card programmed at Flinders Living Administration to allow you access to Car Park 11.

Information on obtaining a Resident Permit may be found here:

<https://www.flinders.edu.au/campus/bedford-park/parking>

### Address details and mail

Mail is delivered to the pigeonholes located in the Hall Common Room and the mail boxes adjacent to the Community Centre for the Village by approximately 3.00 p.m. each weekday. As Australia Post does not deliver direct to Flinders Living, all mail and parcels come through the University Mail Room which has the effect of delaying the mail delivery by approximately 24 hours.

To receive mail we recommend that you address it as follows:

<i>University Hall Postal Address</i>	<i>Village Postal Address</i>
<Your Name> Karna Country Flinders University Hall GPO Box 2100 Adelaide SA 5001 Australia	<Your Name> Karna Country Unit <Unit Number>, Deirdre Jordan Village Flinders University GPO Box 2100 Adelaide SA 5001 Australia
<i>University Hall Street Address (for courier deliveries)</i>	<i>Village Street Address (for courier deliveries)</i>
<Your Name> Karna Country <Hall Room Number> University Hall Flinders University Sturt Road Bedford Park SA 5042 Australia	<Your Name> Karna Country <Village Unit Number> Deirdre Jordan Village Flinders University Sturt Road Bedford Park SA 5042 Australia

Sometimes with ordering via online shopping systems, it will not allow you to enter the above addresses easily. If this is the case the following address may be accepted. It also appears to be accepted by many GPS systems. If the online ordering allows you to include more information, the addition of "Flinders University" or "University Hall" may be helpful in getting their purchases delivered without too much difficulty. Parcels addressed in this manner will be delivered to Flinders Living Administration on Level 1, University Hall.

<Your Name>  
1 Hall Terrace  
Bedford Park SA 5042  
Australia